THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (d). Exploration and exploitation of minerals through the country including the North-Eastern Region and the National Capital Territory of Delhi are on going plan activities of the Government. However, as a part of the overall economic development in the North-Eastern Region Government of India have recently constituted a Task Force for evolving an Action Plan to identify possibilities and thrust areas to facilitate proper exploration and exploitation of mineral resources in the North-Eastern States. Among other things, the Terms of Reference of the Task Force are to identify thrust areas for geological, environmental and mineral studies, to identify individual mineral deposits for exploitation and to recommend neogessary administrative infrastructure for mineral development in the North-Eastern States. No Task Force has been constituted for the National Capital Territory of Delhi by the Ministry of Mines, Government of India.

The Task Force has started preliminary activities and so far no expenditure has been incurred in this regard. The actual amount for exploration and exploitation of mineral resources in the country including the North-Eastern Region are as per the provisions in the Annual Plan and Five Year Plan of the country.

Import/Export of Steel

*414. SHRI SOUMYA RANJAN : Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state :

(a) the quantity of steel produced, imported and exported during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 (so far);

(b) the capacity utilisation of the installed and operational steel plants in the country, separately for public and private sector during these years; and

(c) the steps taken or being taken during 1996-97 to improve the capacity utilisation?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) The quantity of finished steel produced, imported and exported during 1994-95, 1995-96 and April-November, 1996-97 is as under :

(In Million Tonnes)

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97* (April-November) (Provisional)
Production	17.82	21.40	14.80
Import	1.70	1.57	1.04
Export	0.92	1.07	0.65

Partly Estimated.

(b) The capacity utilisation of public and private sector steel plants in production has been estimated as under :

	Public Sector	Private Sector
1994-95	86%	68%
1995-96	87%	67%
1996-97 (April-Nov.)	87%	62%

(c) In a market economy capacity utilisation would depend on several factors such as demand, availability, prices etc. In order to improve capacity utilisation, SAIL has taken up modernisation of its plants at Rourkela, Bokaro and Durgapur. Other steps being taken by SAIL include improving the quality of inputs, improving operating and maintenance practices, maximising captive power generation and improving inter-plant synergy. Similarly, Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) has taken measures to improve capacity utilisation by setting up of balancing facilities, imparting traning and skill development to the employees, taking up modifications to the plans and equipment to improve production and productivity capital restructuring, cost reduction etc.

Acquisition of Electric Passenger Locomotives

*415. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Railways has acquired AC 3 phase 6,000 horse-power electric passenger locomotives from M/s. Asea Brown Bover (ABB) of Switzerland under an agreement for technology transfer;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of passenger and freight locomotives ordered from ABB and the respective haulage capacity of these locomotives; and

(d) the time by which the process of technology transfer is likely to be completed and indigenous manufacture of ABB locos likely to commence?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Indian Railways have acquired 10 Nos. of 5440 HP Electric passenger locomotives alongwith one passenger locomotive to serve as bank of spares at total Free-on-Board cost of Swiss Francs 54268500 + Deutche Marks 42042000 equivalent to Rs. 259 Crores from ABB/Switzerland. These locomotives were acquired by the Railways between Oct. '95 to Sept. '96 against the supply contract placed in July '93.

(c) Ten passenger and twenty freight locomotives were ordered on M/s. ABB in July '93. In addition, 1

passenger loco and 2 freight locos were also ordered to act as bank of spares. Their haulage capacity is as below

Passenger Locomotives

26 coaches at 120Km/h: or

18 coaches at 160 Km/h

Freight Locomotives

4700 Tonne at 100 Km/h on level: or

4700 Tonne at 53 Km/h on 1:200 gradient

(d) The contract for the Transfer of Technology will spread over a period of ten years and would be completed by 2004. The indigenous manufacture of high horse power electric locomotives is planned at Indian Railways' Unit, Viz., Chittaranjan Locomotive Works as under :

1997-98 - 10 locomotives

1998-99 - 30 locomotives (Tentative)

1999-2000 - 50 locomotives (Tentative)

Welfare Scheme for Agricultural Labourers

*416. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) the welfare schemes approved by the Union Government for agricultural labourers in Delhi and other States during each of the last three years, and the current financial year so far;

(b) the extent to which the agricultural labourers have been benefited by these schemes;

(c) the amount allocated for the purpose during the above period;

(d) whether the Goverenment propose to take some more steps in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) to (c). A statement is attached.

(d) and (e). The Government are considering enactment of a comprehensive legislation to regulate employment and conditions of service and to provide for welfare of agricultural workers.

STATEMENT

There are no welfare schemes approved by the Union Government only for the agricultural workers of Delhi as such. However, some of major schemes undertaken for the welfare of rural population below poverty line, including agricultural workers under special employment and poverty alleviation programmes include :

(i) Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)

Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided for acquiring income generating assets, comprising of a varying mix of subsidies and term credit at differential rates for small farmers, marginal farmers, agricultural labourers and rural artisans with special provision for SC/STs and women. Number of families assisted under the scheme upto October, 1996 is 615166. Total funds allocated during the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 were 1098-22 crores, 1097.21 crores and 1097.21 crores respectively.

(ii) Jawahar Rojgar Yojna (JRY) -

This scheme aims at generation of additional gainful employment and creation of productive community assets. Employment generation under the scheme during 1996-97 (Upto October, 1996) was 1656-46 lakh mandays. Funds allocated during the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 were Rs. 2800 crores, Rs. 3240 crores and 2236.79 crores respectively. This schemes has been intensified in 120 backward districts of the country where there is concentration of unemployment and underemployment.

(iii) Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) -

On 2nd October, 1993, a new scheme known as 'Employment Assurance Scheme' was launched in 1752 identified backward blocks throughout the country which seeks to provide assured wage employment of 100 days of unskilled manual work in lean agricultural season. The scheme mainly benefits agricultural workers. This scheme has since been extended to 3206 blocks. No targets are fixed under this scheme. Number of persons registered upto October, 1996 since beginning under this scheme is 22325379. Employment generated under this scheme upto October, 1996 is 1347.16 lakh mandays. Allocation of funds for the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 was Rs. 1200 crores, Rs. 1278.09 crores and Rs. 777.37 crores respectively.

(iv) Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) -

A scheme known as Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) was launched in 1982-83 for bringing about economic and social upliftment of rural women belonging to families below the poverty line using a group approach for taking up income generating activities suited to their skills and aptitude. The scheme operates in conjunction with IRDP and Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM).

(v) National Social Assistance Scheme (NSAS) -

The Government of India have announced a NSA Scheme for the poor. This contemplates old age pension